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WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT.



Great London city, thrice beneath his sway
Confirm'd the presage of that happy day,
When echoing bells their greeting thus begun,
"Return, thrice Mayor! Return, oh Whittington.—BISHOP.

We here present to our readers "the true portraiture" of the renowned Sir Richard Whittington, knight; the greatest Lord Mayor that ever lived; clad in the ancient costume, and attended by his distinguished favourite, the idea of which is always connected in our minds with this famous Lord Mayor, "all of the olden time." It is taken from an old print by *Elstrack*; and it is a curious fact, that the knight's hand formerly leaned upon a human skull, for which a cat was afterwards substituted. In illustration of the subject, we extract from an ingenious and spirited little volume, lately written by Mr. Keightley*.

Richard Whittington was born in the year 1360. He followed the business of a mercer in the city of London, and acquired great wealth. Having served the office of sheriff with credit, in the year 1393, he was chosen Lord Mayor, and filled that office not less than three times, namely, in the years 1397, 1406, and 1419. He was knighted, it is said, by King Henry the Fifth, to whom he lent large sums of money for his wars in France; and he died full of years and honours in 1425.

"This year," (1406,) says Grafton, "a worthy citizen of London, named Richard Whittington, mercer and alderman, was elected Mayor of the said city, and bore that office three times. This worshipful man so bestowed his goods and substance to the honour of God, to the relief of the poor, and to the benefit of the common-weal, that he hath right well-deserved, to be registered in the book of fame. First, he erected one house, a church, in London, to be a house of prayer, and named the same after his own name, Whittington College, and so it remaineth to this day; and in the said church, beside certain priests and clerks, he placed a number of poor aged men and women, and builded for them houses and lodgings, and allowed unto them, wood, coal, cloth, and weekly money, to their great relief and comfort. This man, also, at his own cost, builded the gate of London, called Newgate, in the year of our Lord, 1422, which before, was a most ugly and loathsome prison. He also builded more than half of Saint Bartholomew's Hospital, in West Smithfield, in London. Also he builded, of hard-stone, the beautiful library in the Grey Friars, in London, now called Christ's Hospital, standing in the north part of the cloister thereof, where in the wall, his arms are graven in stone. He also builded, for the ease of the mayor of London, and his brethren, and of the worshipful citizens, at the solemn days of their assembly, a chapel adjoining to the Guildhall; to the intent they should ever, before they entered into any of their affairs, first go into the chapel, and by prayer, call upon God for his assistance. And in the end, joining on the south side of the chapel, he builded for the city a library of stone, for the custody of their records and other books. He also builded a great part of the east end of Guildhall, beside many other good works that I know not. But among all others, I will show unto you one very notable, which I received credibly by a writing of his own hand, which also he willed to be fixed as a schedule to his last will and testament. He willed and commanded his executors, as they would answer before God at the day of the resurrection of all flesh, that if they found any debtor of his that ought to him any money, if he were not, in their consciences, well worth *three times as much*, and also out of the debt of other men, and well able to pay, that then they should never demand it, for he clearly forgave it, and that they should put no man in suit for any debt due to him. *Look upon this ye aldermen, for it is a glorious glass!*"

Stow informs us, that Richard Whittington rebuilt the parish church of St. Michael Royal, and made a college of St. Spirit and St. Mary, with an almshouse, called God's House or Hospital, for thirteen poor men, who were to pray for the good estate of Richard Whittington, and of Alice his wife, their founders; and for Sir William Whittington, knight, and Dame Joan his wife; and for Hugh Fitzwarren, and Dame Malde his wife, the fathers and mothers of the said Richard Whittington, and Alice his wife; for King Richard the Second, Thomas

* *Tales and Popular Fictions*, by Thomas Keightley. 1834.
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of Woodstock, &c. Hence it clearly follows, that Sir Richard Whittington never could have been a poor bare-legged boy; for it is here plainly asserted that his father was a knight, no mean distinction in those days. Yet in every popular account of Whittington, he is said to have been born in very humble circumstances. This erroneous idea has evidently been owing to the popular legend of him and his cat, and it shows how fiction will occasionally drive truth out of her domain. Such, then, is the real history of this renowned Lord Mayor; but tradition, we know, tells a very different tale: and it is as follows.

Dick Whittington, a poor orphan boy, came up to London from the country, and a rich merchant, named Fitzwarren, took compassion on him, and put him into the kitchen under his cook, who treated him harshly: but Miss Alice, his master's daughter, showed him much kindness. The rats and mice that swarmed in the garret where he slept led him a wretched life, till, with a penny he had gotten, he purchased a cat. Dick's master, Mr. Fitzwarren, was shortly afterwards sending a ship to sea, and he gave all his servants permission to send out a venture in her. Poor Dick had no property on earth but his cat, and, by his master's orders, he fetched her down from his garret, and committed her to the captain with tears in his eyes, for he said he should now be kept awake all night by the rats and mice. All laughed at Dick's venture, but Miss Alice kindly gave him money to purchase another cat.

The ship was driven to the coast of Barbary, and the captain having sent out specimens of his cargo to the king of the country, he and his chief mate were invited to court, where they were royally entertained; but the moment the dishes were set on the table, rats and mice ran from all sides and devoured what was on them. The captain was told, that the king would give half his wealth to be delivered of this torment; and, instantly recollecting poor Dick's cat, he told the king that he could destroy them. He went down to the ship, and fetched up Puss under his arm. The tables were covered once more, and the usual havoc begun, when the cat, jumping among the depredators, made a carnage of them, which amazed all present. The king, out of gratitude, purchased the whole ship's cargo, and gave, over and above, a great quantity of gold for the cat, and the captain set sail for England.

To whom is the subsequent history of Richard Whittington unknown? Who knows not how, during the absence of the ship, he ran away from the ill-treatment of the cook, and had gotten as far as Holloway, when he sat down on the stone, on the site of which is one called at this very day "Whittington's Stone*," and heard Bow-bells ring out,

Turn again Whittington,
Thrice Lord Mayor of London!

and how he married good Miss Alice, and became, in reality, Lord Mayor of this great city?

In the whole of this legendary history there is, we may see, not one single word of truth further than this,—that the maiden name of Lady Whittington was Alice Fitzwarren. It is really deserving of attention, as an instance of the manner in which tradition will falsify history; and it would be extremely interesting to ascertain the exact age of the legend. Neither Grafton nor Hollingshed, who copies him, says any thing of the legendary history of Sir Richard; but it must have been current in the reign of Elizabeth,

* In the immediate neighbourhood of this, just at the foot of Highgate Hill, is the neat and comfortable college, lately erected, called Whittington's College, in the centre of the principal court of which is a figure of the founder, as "a bare-legged boy," sitting on the Holloway stone.

for, in the Prologue to a play, written about 1613, the citizen says; "Why could you not be contented, as well as others, with the legend of Whittington? or the life and death of Sir Thomas Gresham, with the building of the Royal Exchange? or the story of Queen Eleanor, with the rearing of London Bridge upon woolsacks?" The word *legend* in this case would seem to indicate the story of the cat; and we cannot, therefore, well assign it a later date than the sixteenth century.

Cats, we know, fetched a high price in America, when it was first colonized by the Spaniards. Two cats, we are told, were taken out on speculation to Guyana, where there was a plague of rats, and they were sold for a pound of gold. Their first kittens fetched, each, thirty pieces of eight, the next generation, went for about twenty, and the price gradually fell, as the colony became stocked with them. The elder Almagro, is also said to have given six hundred pieces of eight, to the person who presented him with the first cat which was brought to South America. On reading this, we might feel disposed to assign a historical foundation to the legend of Whittington and his Cat; but, it is more probably an independent British fiction.

It is strange what a propensity there is to assign some other cause for the acquisition of riches, than industry, frugality, and skill, (the usual and surest road to wealth.) I hardly ever knew, in my own country, says Mr. Keightley, an instance of a man who, as the phrase goes, "had risen from nothing," that there was not some extraordinary mode of accounting for his attainment of wealth. The simple and most usual explanation of the wonder was, to assert that he had gotten a *treasure* some way or other. Thus, for example, I once knew a man, whose original name had been Halfpenny (when he rose in the world he refined it to Halpen), and who had grown rich from the humblest means. I was, one day, when a boy, speaking of him and his success in the world to our gardener; "Sure, then, you are not such a *gommaril* (fool), Sir," said he, smiling at my simplicity, "as to believe it was by honest industry he made all his money? I'll tell you, Sir, how it *raley* was: you see he sent one time to the Castle for a keg of half-pence, and, by the laws! what did they send him, in mistake, but a keg full of *goulden* guineas! And Jemmy, you see, was *cute*, and he kept his own secret, and by degrees he throve in the world, and became the man he is. That's the *rule* truth of it for you." Here, then, we have an instance of the name giving occasion to the legend.

Other persons have a wonderful inclination to discover a ground-work of historical truth in popular legends. Whittington's Cat has not escaped their shrewdness, for in some popular *History of England*, the story has been explained, as it is called; and two or three country newspapers, have copied the explanation with evident delight. Sir Richard Whittington was, it seems, the owner of a *ship* named the *Cat*, by his traffic in which he acquired the greater part of his wealth. It is not, however, quite clear, that our worthy mercer was directly engaged in foreign traffic.

HENRY the Eighth encouraged foreigners, and Germans in particular, to settle and trade in London, and separate streets were assigned to the various branches of trade. The haberdashers adjourned to East Cheape, and also to London Bridge; pepperers and grocers, in Bucklersbury; all the cooks' shops, were in Cooks' Row in Thames Street; the granaries of the City were kept in Leadenhall Street; and all the bread was baked at Stratford-le-Bow, and brought thence to the city.—*Life and Times of Henry VIII.*

SUPERSTITIONS RELATING TO BEES.

So work the honey bees:
Creatures that, by a rule of nature, teach
The art of order to a peopled kingdom.—SHAKESPEARE.

THE lower orders of people in this and some other places, have curious superstitions respecting bees. A poor old widow once complained to me that all her stocks had died, and on inquiring the cause, she informed me that on the death of her husband a short time before, she had neglected to tap at each of the hives, to inform the bees of the circumstance: in consequence of this omission, they had been gradually getting weaker and weaker, and that now she had not one left. This may appear a solitary instance of superstition, but I believe it will be found that, very generally, on the death of a cottager who has kept bees, some ceremonious observance takes place.

A correspondent of Mr. Loudon's mentions, that in Norfolk, at places where bees are kept, it is peremptory, in case of the death of any of the family, to put the bees in mourning, or the consequence would be that all of them would die. The person who made the assertion mentioned a case in point, where, from the neglect of the custom, every bee in the apiary had perished. The method of putting them in mourning, is by attaching a piece of black cloth to each of the hives. Another correspondent also says, that in the neighbourhood of Coventry, in the event of the death of any of the family, it is considered necessary to inform the bees of the circumstance, otherwise they will dwindle and die. The manner of communicating the intelligence to the little community, is with due form and ceremony to take the key of the house, and knock with it three times against the hive, informing the inmates, at the same time, that their master or mistress, as the case may be, is dead. A similar custom prevails in Kent, and in some places it is considered expedient to communicate any great event that may take place to these industrious insects. The use of a key seems necessary in another ceremony which takes place in regard to bees.

When a swarm has quitted one of my hives, I always observe that a key is used to induce it to settle, by striking it against a frying-pan, and I should feel some regret if this good old custom was omitted. So far from letting the *ringer* think that the tinkling noise he makes is a useless one, I always encourage the practice of it, and it is one of the pleasurable sounds of the country. Often have I quitted my room on hearing it, to enjoy the sight of my additional wealth, and to assist in securing it. The day is sure to be warm and smiling, and I watch the increased accumulation of my clustering bees with infinite satisfaction. The old customs I have been mentioning, and many similar ones which are practised by my poorer neighbours, may be laughed at, but I like them all, as long as they are innocent, and consider them as adding in some degree to the interest of a country life.

To a thinking mind, few phenomena are more striking than the clustering of bees on some bough, where they remain, in order, as it were, to be ready for hiving. I observe that where a hive is fixed over a swarm, the bees will generally go into it of their own accord, uttering at the same time their satisfied hum, and seeming to be aware of the purpose for which it was placed near them. How the queen bee is made acquainted that so convenient a place for her to retreat to is near at hand, I know not, but so it is. Surrounded by thousands of her subjects who press around her, she makes her way through them all, and enters the hive, followed by the whole swarm. Some means of communication must have taken place, as it is quite impossible that she could herself have seen the snug retreat which had been prepared for her. Here the work of preparing future cells is instantly commenced, and I have found that although a swarm has not been able for two or three days to quit the hive, after they had taken possession of it, a considerable number of cells had been nearly completed. Even as soon as the foundation of a cell has been finished, the queen bee will sometimes deposit an egg upon it, the sides being afterwards built up.

Nothing can be more melancholy than the appearance of bees in wet weather. Some of them I have observed to come to the mouth of the hive, as if to take a view of the passing clouds, and some of those who are tempted to quit the hive, return to it with the greatest difficulty. A sun-shiny day in May is their delight, and it is then that bees seem most active and most joyous.—JESSE'S *Gleanings in Natural History*.

THE ISLAND OF MADAGASCAR.

I. SITUATION AND EXTENT—NATURAL PRODUCTIONS—MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE NATIVES.

THE Island of Madagascar is one of those very few spots, in the direct line of the operations of Europeans of all nations, which still remain in the possession of their ancient inhabitants. This is not, indeed, for want of inclination on the part of Europeans, but from the character of the natives, who, jealous of their liberty, have successfully resisted every attempt to subjugate them. It is the third island in size in the world, being about 900 miles long from North to South, and 300 broad in its widest part. Its name, in the language of the country, is indistinctly pronounced *Madecasse*, or *Malegash*; the Portuguese called it *Isle de St. Lawrence*, but MADAGASCAR is now the general name by which it is designated.

It extends from 12° to 25° 40' South latitude, and from 43° 41' to 50° 30' East longitude, and is 670 leagues from the Cape of Good Hope, 186 from the Isle of France, and 150 from that of Bourbon. The coast is divided throughout by rivers, many of them navigable a considerable way up their channels, and the bays and gulfs are numerous, forming excellent roads and harbours. The island is estimated to contain two hundred millions of acres, and the face of the country consists of vast plains, and forests, the trees of which are of immense size and height, and overhang the sides of the mountains, whose summits, in the back-ground, are lost in the clouds. Many of the woods are of great extent, and all of them are difficult to explore, on account of the tangled brushwood, and the huge parasitical and climbing plants, which form an impenetrable mass.

The mountains are numerous, and abound in mines of iron, steel, silver, and copper; gold also, and precious stones are found in the streams. The plains are diversified with rising grounds, on which the towns and villages are built. These are surrounded by plantations of rice, barley, yams, &c., while the streams that intersect it in every direction, impart great beauty and fertility.

This island is divided into twenty-eight or thirty provinces, all of them very fertile, and abounding with cattle and pasture; formerly, these were each governed by its own chieftain, but of late years, a large part of the island has been under the dominion of one monarch, who resides at Tananarive, a town nearly in the centre, or towards the southern end of the island. The port that is chiefly resorted to by the Europeans, is Tamatave, on the eastern side; and not far from thence, to the north, is the Isle St. Mary, an extremely rich and fertile spot, within about three leagues of the main island, and dependent upon it. The famous Buccaneers, or Pirates, had a settlement here about the beginning of the last century, where they formed alliances with the native chiefs, among whom many of their descendants to this day hold rank.

The soil in general consists of a rich deep mould, which, aided by the mild temperature of the atmosphere, produces the most luxuriant vegetation. In the south, are some extensive plains of arid sand, but these spots are rare. The air is salubrious in the neighbourhood of the mountains; and the plains are not unhealthy, except in the rainy season, or while the red rice is growing, which requires the land to be flooded.

The towns are generally built on eminences, and are surrounded by stockades, strengthened by large posts of bamboo at short distances. On the outside of the stockade is a deep ditch, and within it a parapet of earth. The houses consist of one floor only; the roof is covered with leaves of the raven-palm; the walls consist of planks, lined with matting. The space within is divided into apartments, by matting; there are no chimneys, and the smoke is intolerable to a European. Most of the dwellings are surrounded and shaded with fruit and other trees of a thick foliage, particularly the raven-palm, which gives a picturesque and interesting appearance to the towns and villages, some of which are very large and populous.

The natural productions of Madagascar are numerous in kind, and abundant in quality. Of quadrupeds, there are four varieties of oxen, including the bison. The flesh of all these is excellent, and a plentiful supply is always obtained by our East India ships, at a cheap rate. The sheep are similar to those at the Cape of Good Hope, having tails that weigh from twelve to twenty pounds. The babyroussa, a species of hog with curled tusks, is a native of the woods, and with the porcupine, hedge-hog,

tendrac, baboons of a large size, monkeys, badgers, foxes, civet-cats, wild-cats, crocodiles, and two or three beasts of prey; completes the catalogue of quadrupeds, unless we include the *Rausette*, or great Madagascar Bat, (the Vampire of the ancients,) among the number. This extraordinary animal is a foot long, and extends its wings four feet. Towards evening, clouds of them hover about the woods, destroying the ripe fruits and domestic fowls, and frequently attacking the natives, who, however, eagerly pursue them for food, their flesh being much esteemed.

Birds are very numerous, and among the insects and reptiles, there are four species of lizards, including the chameleon, and the *breastleaper*, a curious animal, not generally described. It attaches itself to the bark of the trees, and will frequently leap upon the natives, clinging so fast by means of a sort of hook with which it is furnished, on the tail, legs, neck, and body, that they are obliged to cut away the skin. Snakes of different kinds are common, some of a large size, but none venomous; scorpions, and centipedes, and flies, are also found in every part. The fire-fly is so numerous, that Flacourt, a Frenchman, who wrote an account of the island in 1661, says he once thought his house was in flames, being almost covered with them. There are four species of silk-worms, *all quadrupeds*, and much of the silk they produce is of the finest quality.

It is in the vegetable creation, however, that Madagascar displays a most wonderful profusion. The edible plants comprise, among many others, barley, beans, pease, red and white rice, including *eleven* varieties, yams, nine species of tobacco, ananas, water-melons, musk-melons, the sugar-cane, &c. Of fruit trees, there are many peculiar to the island, bearing delicious fruit, also figs, grapes, cocoa-nuts, almonds, tamarinds, a species of apples, and cardamoms. Spices also are numerous. In the forests are hard woods of the most beautiful varieties, fit for cabinet uses, and timber-trees of enormous bulk and height. Of the latter, the raven-palm is the most useful, as well as ornamental; it rises to a great height, affording shelter to the houses, near which the natives usually plant it. The ends of the stems are boiled and eaten like cabbage, the wood is used in building, the ribs of the leaves for partitions and floors, the leaves for covering the roof, and also for dishes; and a gum, of exquisite flavour and sweetness, is extracted from the blossom. Hemp, flax, cotton, the papyrus-nilotica, bamboos, palms, several odoriferous woods, the banyan, the dragon-tree, balsam-tree, and a multitude of others, together with the pitcher-plant, and various gums and resins, are also plentiful. The streams yield crystals, topazes, amethysts, emeralds, sapphires, hyacinths, cornelians, &c., which are manufactured by the natives into various ornaments, set in gold, at which they are very expert.

The natives of Madagascar are above the common stature, strong-limbed, and of fine symmetry; their colour includes all the varieties between dingy-white and jet-black, owing to the mixtures of the different tribes. The women are handsome in their features, and delicate in their shape, with soft glossy skins, and white teeth. The hair of the unmarried flows in ringlets over the shoulders; the married women wear theirs in the form of a bouquet on the top of the head.

The dress of the men is a kind of apron, called a *lamba*, fastened round the waist, and reaching to the knees. It is made of silk, cotton, or the filaments of the bark of several kinds of trees. Persons of note wear ornaments of gold and silver, such as chains, rings, bracelets, ear-rings, necklaces, &c. On public days, the dress of the chiefs is splendid; they *lambas*, of white cotton, full, and reaching to the feet, and having a deep border of striped silk, and a silk cloak, thrown over the shoulders, with a profusion of ornaments, bespeak their consequence and rank.

The dress of the women consists of a *lamba*, reaching to the feet, above which they wear a close garment, that covers all the body, and is confined at the neck and waist; it is made of dark silk, or cotton, and ornamented with beads. The wives of the chiefs wear, in addition, a beautiful shawl, called a *pagna*, made of silk, cotton, or the filaments of the raven-palm. Both men and women go bare-headed, except in the province of Manghabei.

The population has been estimated at four millions, though some accounts have stated it larger. It is, however, small in proportion to the size and fertility of the island, from causes of which we shall presently speak. The character of the people, when first discovered, exhibited

the failings and the virtues of most savage nations. Placed in a land literally flowing with milk and honey, they exhibited an easy and indolent disposition. Abstemious in their habits, they had but little excitement to rouse them, except on particular public occasions. Towards those with whom they were in friendship, their conduct was humane, generous, and good-natured, but they are easily provoked, and quick in their resentments. They possess considerable mental powers, and readily comprehend and reason upon any new subject. Their public speakers display great eloquence and flow of language, their addresses being argumentative and conclusive.

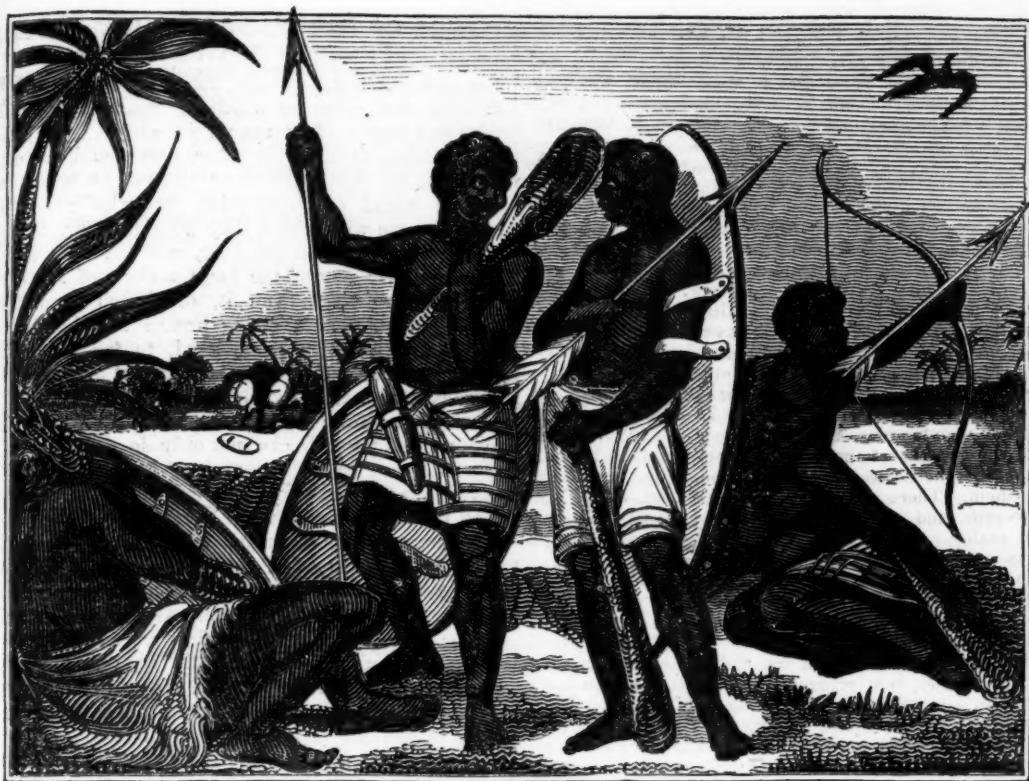
They are much given to superstition, and the practice of witchcraft prevails to a great extent. The *Ombiasses*, or magicians, have great influence over the people, who are much afraid of them. Polygamy is practised throughout the island, limited only by the resources of the party; the first wife, however, is the superior. The women are cheerful and captivating in their manners, passionately fond of dancing and singing, but generally preserve propriety and decorum. The honesty of these people towards each other is remarkable; they have no bars or locks. Every precaution is taken to prevent a surprise from a hostile tribe, but within their intrenchments all is security and confidence.

It is generally supposed that there are three distinct races in Madagascar: first, the whites of Anossi and Matatune, who call themselves *Zafe Rahimini*, or descendants of *Imina*, the mother of Mahomet. Secondly, the *Zafe Hibrahini*, or descendants of Abraham, who are also whites, and inhabit Isle St. Mary and the country opposite on the main island. The third race comprises the blacks or olives, who are the aborigines of the country.

These are divided into classes, of which the first, or *Zafe Rahimini*, occupy the higher stations; and the latter the lowest. The *Zafe Hibrahini* are distinct from both, and appear to have been on the island from a very remote period. It has been supposed, indeed, that they are sprung from some of Abraham's family, and arrived at their present locality soon after the death of that patriarch, as there is no tradition extant of their coming thither; but this is mere supposition, though many of their customs, such as circumcision, and other ceremonies, would seem to connect them with a very ancient people. Their religion is nearly approaching to what is called natural religion; they acknowledge and worship one God, and have not fallen into gross idolatry, much less have they practised many revolting rites common in heathen nations. Every man is a priest in his own house, and an *oli*, or *teraphim*, is used as the medium of communication with the Deity. They believe in a future state, and a world of spirits, and that some of these are employed as mediators or agents, possessing great influence with the Deity; but they offer no worship to these; *Unghorray*, or God alone, being the object of their prayers and sacrifices.

They have an indistinct belief of the Creation, the Fall, and of the Flood, mixed with much superstition, in the absence of a divine revelation. They observe the Sabbath as a day of rest from labour, but have no temples or stated period of worship, the latter being purely spontaneous, and having neither divine nor moral law to guide them. In sickness, or on the burial of the dead, or circumcision, or any other solemn occasion, the friends and attendants offer up prayers and sacrifices to the Deity, with many forms of a superstitious nature, on all which occasions, the heads of families preside.

But the horrid rite of exposing their children to destruction is common among them; this is the reason of the smallness of the population; and the wonder is, that so large a population still remains. The periods denounced as unfortunate, are the months of March and April, the eighth day and last week of every month, and Wednesday and Friday in every week; so that in more than half the year is the human race proscribed, all the children born at those periods, being devoted to destruction, and the population attacked at the very source. Some parents, however, allowing their affection to overcome their superstitious fears, have secretly employed slaves to save their children, while sacrifices of oxen and fowls are offered up, to avert the supposed impending danger of the malignant star. It is gratifying to know, that this dreadful custom is giving way to the mild precepts of Christianity, having been prohibited by the late King Radama, who, as we shall have occasion to relate, made great advances towards the civilization of his subjects.



DRESS AND ARMS OF THE NATIVES OF MADAGASCAR.

The manners of these islanders are marked with simplicity; the usual hour of dinner is ten o'clock in the morning, and of supper, four in the afternoon. With every luxury in their power, they eat sparingly, except on special occasions. Mats are laid on the floor, and their food is served up on wooden dishes, the leaves of the raven-palm serving for plates. European furniture and customs, however, are now gaining ground, and rendering their houses more comfortable. They have many amusements besides dancing, and a few musical instruments. Hunting wild buffaloes, boars, foxes, crocodiles, &c., occupies a great deal of their time. They have some little knowledge of astronomy, and divide the Zodiac into twelve signs, and the year into twelve months. Only one language is spoken throughout the island, with slight provincial differences. It is chiefly Arabic, but agreeable to the Greek in construction. The *Ombiasses* are their learned men, and use the Arabic character, writing also from right to left.

The civil arts are practised to a considerable extent, embracing iron-founders, goldsmiths, carpenters, potters, weavers, mat and basket makers, and many other trades. Wine is made in considerable quantities; indigo, also, of an excellent quality, is manufactured by a simple process. Paper is made from the bark of the real papyrus nilotica, in a manner very similar to that practised with us, though more simple. Their ink is a decoction of a sap from a tree, and their pens are made of small bamboos, rendered hard and transparent by boiling and baking.

Trade was formerly conducted by barter, but of late years they have learned the use of money as a medium of exchange, which will no doubt, in time, universally prevail. They have some foreign trade, which might be extended to any degree, the produce of the island being unbanded. Their dyeing woods possess an exceeding brilliancy of colour, and their silk and cotton are equal to any from the East. Before many more years are passed, these people may be competitors in the European markets, in many articles which are now exclusively procured from our eastern colonies.

The practice of war, unfortunately, occupies a large portion of their time; and their wars have been aggravated and multiplied a hundred fold since their intercourse with Europeans, and the consequent introduction of the slave-trade. Their weapons were formerly clubs, bows and

arrows, and spears, but these, being superseded by the musket and sword of the European, are now fast falling into disuse.

The island was formerly divided into four or six kingdoms, until the arrival of the race of *Ramini*, when their leader was chosen *Ampansacabe*, or sovereign of the whole, which form continued for twenty-four generations, ending with *Ramini Larizon*, who was killed in an insurrection. At present, nearly all the island is under one king, and probably will, in time, be wholly so; each province, however, is governed by its own chief, and its own code of laws, but subject to the general laws of the island. Thus, in Ghalimboule, each town is a distinct republic, governed by a *filoubet*, or president. The military force is great; every one capable of bearing arms is a warrior, and they are called together by proclamation, which they durst not disobey. Radama, on one occasion, marched with an army of a hundred thousand men to fight the Seelavis, a large proportion being armed and accoutred in the European manner. The soldiery have no other pay than the booty they obtain, and when the expedition is over they disband.

They have a regular code of criminal laws, called *Mas-sinditi*, not written, but handed down by tradition; the penalties are inflicted in a summary manner, and when the proofs are apparent to many spectators, the injured party may inflict the sentence on the spot, without the intervention of a judge. They have also a civil code, (*Massinpo*), applicable to the behaviour of private persons in their trades, conversation, support of their families, &c.; and it regulates the private transactions between man and man. There is also a general standard of conduct which includes in its operation the whole of their domestic economy. It is called *Massintani*, and enjoins the observance of ancient customs, ceremonies, businesses, and amusements, and reduces them all to a system. Thus the customs of former ages are as well provided for, as the punishment of offenders against the laws.

Such is Madagascar, and such its inhabitants, who were found by their first European visitors living in a simple and patriarchal manner; possessing, with great vices, a proportion of the ordinary virtues of savage life. In a succeeding paper, we shall shortly detail the particulars of their history.

A PERSIAN STORY.

SADIK BEG was of good family, handsome in person, and possessed of good sense and courage, but he was poor, having no property but his sword and his horse, with which he served as a gentleman retainer of a nobleman. The latter, satisfied of the purity of Sâdik's descent, and entertaining a respect for his character, determined to make him the husband of his daughter, Hooseinee, who, though beautiful, as her name implied, was remarkable for her haughty manner and ungovernable temper.

Giving a husband of the condition of Sâdik Beg to a lady of Hooseinee's rank, was, according to usage in such unequal matches, like giving her a slave; and as she heard a good report of his personal qualities, she offered no objections to the marriage, which was celebrated soon after it was proposed, and apartments were assigned to the happy couple in the Nabob's palace.

Some of Sâdik Beg's friends rejoiced in his good fortune, as they saw, in the connexion he had formed, a sure prospect of his advancement. Others mourned the fate of so fine and promising a young man, now condemned to bear through life all the humours of a proud and capricious woman; but one of his friends, a little man, called Merdek, who was completely hen-pecked by his own wife, was particularly rejoiced, and quite chuckled at the thought of seeing another in the same condition with himself.

About a month after the nuptials Merdek met his friend, and, with malicious pleasure, wished him joy of his marriage:—"Most sincerely do I congratulate you, Sâdik," said he, "on this happy event!" "Thank you, my good fellow; I am very happy indeed, and rendered more so by the joy I perceive it gives my friends." "Do you really mean to say you are happy?" said Merdek, with a smile. "I really am so," replied Sâdik. "Nonsense," said his friend; "do we not all know to what a termagant you are united? and her temper and high rank combined, must, no doubt, make her a sweet companion." Here he burst into a loud laugh, and the little man actually strutted with a feeling of superiority over the bridegroom.

Sâdik, who knew his situation and feelings, was amused instead of being angry. "My friend," said he, "I quite understand the grounds of your apprehension for my happiness. Before I was married, I had heard the same reports as you have done of my beloved bride's disposition; but I am happy to say I have found it quite otherwise; she is a most docile and obedient wife." "But how has this miraculous change been wrought?" "Why," said Sâdik, "I believe I have some merit in effecting it; but you shall hear."

"After the ceremonies of our nuptials were over, I went in my military dress, and with my sword by my side, to the apartment of Hooseinee. She was sitting in a most dignified posture to receive me, and her looks were any thing but inviting. As I entered the room, a beautiful cat, evidently a great favourite, came purring up to me. I deliberately drew my sword, struck its head off, and taking that in one hand, and the body in the other, threw them out of the window. I then very unconcernedly turned to the lady, who appeared in some alarm; she, however, made no observations, but was in every way kind and submissive, and has continued so ever since."

"Thank you, my dear fellow," said little Merdek, with a significant shake of the head—"a word to the wise:" and away he capered, obviously quite rejoiced.

It was near evening when this conversation took place: soon after, when the dark cloak of night had enveloped the bright radiance of day, Merdek entered the chamber of his spouse, with something of a martial swagger, armed with a scimitar. The unsuspecting cat came forward as usual, to welcome the husband of her mistress; but in an instant her head was divided from her body, by a blow from the hand which had so often caressed her. Merdek having proceeded so far courageously, stooped to take up the dismembered members of the cat, but before he could effect this, a blow upon the side of the head, from his incensed lady, laid him sprawling on the floor.

The tattle and scandal of the day spreads from zenâneh to zenâneh with surprising rapidity, and the wife of Merdek saw in a moment whose example it was that he imitated. "Take that," said she, as she gave him another cuff, "take that, you paltry wretch; you should," she added, laughing him to scorn, "have killed the cat on the wedding-day."

[Ab-ridged from SKETCHES IN PERSIA.]

POWER OF THE SENSES OF HEARING AND FEELING IN THE BLIND.

PEOPLE are not generally aware of the powers of the ear, and instances which we may quote of it in the blind may at first appear incredible. We have known blind men, for instance, who could not only ascertain the shape and dimensions of an apartment by the sound of their voice, but who could, on entering one with which they were familiar, tell by striking their cane on the floor, and listening to the echo, whether any of the large articles of furniture had been removed from it, or shifted from their usual places. What seeing person would think it possible, with his eyes bandaged, to tell which was the tallest, and which was the shortest of a number of speakers, merely by the direction in which the sound came from their mouths to his ear? Yet many blind persons can not only do this, but can ascertain very nearly the ages of the persons. We have made this experiment in more than fifty instances with the blind, and in the great majority of cases they came as near the mark as we did, aided by the eyes. There is no doubt that the voice is changed with every changing year; we seize only upon the extremes of the chain; we can tell the shrill scream of the child, from the rough firm voice of manhood, and the trembling tones of old age; but besides these,—besides the difference in the volume and pitch which exists between the voices of different persons, there is another produced by the course of years; and time stamps his impress upon the voice, as surely as upon the face. The blind man tests these by his practised ear, and not only can ascertain with tolerable correctness the age of the speaker, but pronounce upon his height, the dimensions of his chest, and so forth.

Nor is this the most extraordinary part of the discriminating power of some blind men, who seize upon the slight variations of the intonation of the voice, as we do upon the changes of the countenance, and judge by them of what is passing in the mind of the speaker. We seldom think of the voice; but it is upon this that the blind man seizes, as upon a thread, to direct him to the seat of the passions. Hence it is, that some of them can ascertain on so short an acquaintance the disposition and character of persons: they are not imposed on by the splendour of dress, they are not prejudiced by an ungainly air, they are not won by a smile, nor are they dazzled by the blaze of beauty, or led captive, as many are wont to be, by the fascination of a lovely eye. The voice is to them the criterion of beauty, and when its melodious tones come forcibly stamped with sincerity from the soul, their imaginations at once give to the speaker a graceful form, and a beautiful face.

The ear of some animals is surprisingly acute, and there is no doubt that it is improved by blindness. We know of a horse who, after becoming blind, evidently had his hearing very much sharpened; when feeding in the pasture with others, far from the road, he would hear the sound of hoofs, and raise his head, and whinny out his salute, long before his companions betrayed any consciousness of the approach of the passing stranger.

So with the blind man, when he is walking along the street he can tell whether it is wide or narrow, whether the houses are high or low, whether an opening which he may be passing is a court closed up at the end, or whether it has an outlet to another street; and he can tell by the sound of his footsteps in what lane, or court, or square he is. He goes along boldly, seeming to see with his ears, and to have landmarks in the air.

The accuracy of the ear gives to blind persons a very great advantage in music; they depend entirely upon it; and hence they harmonize so well together, and keep such perfect accord in time, that Paganini, after listening to some pieces performed by pupils of the Institution for the Blind in Paris, declared that he never before had an adequate notion of what harmony was.

The touch is capable of being equally perfected, and many remarkable instances are given of this. Saunderson*, the blind Professor of Mathematics in the University of Cambridge, became such a connoisseur of ancient coins, that he could detect the modern counterfeits, even when good eyes were puzzled about them. There lived a few years ago a blind man in Austria, who executed very good busts by feeling the faces of persons, and imitating them; and there is now a bust of the late Emperor, executed by this blind man, and preserved in the Museum in Vienna, which is considered a very good likeness. Persons who have witnessed exhibitions at the Institutions for the blind, have been surprised at the ease with which they can read books printed in raised letters, by passing the fingers rapidly over them: this, however, is by no means so extraordinary as many other instances which are notorious, though not well understood. A blind man, for instance, when walking in a perfect calm, can ascertain the proximity of objects by the feeling of the atmosphere upon his face; it would seem at first that the echo given back, were it only from his breathing, might be sensible to his ear; but we have ascertained by experiment, that a blind man with his ears stopped, could tell when any large object was close to his face, even when it was approached so slowly as not to cause any sensible current of air.

It is a common supposition that the blind can distinguish colours, but after much research we are convinced that this is impossible; all the blind, whom we have consulted on the subject, have replied that they had no such power, and they did not believe that any blind person ever had it. Indeed, what tangible quality can there be in a substance so ethereal, that it passes unobstructed through dense glass? There was an instance of a girl in England, who was generally believed to have this power; and the trials and tests which she successfully underwent somewhat puzzled us, until an explanation of the difficulty offered itself in the chemical properties of the different coloured rays of light. She could ascertain the colours of different pieces of cloth by applying them to her lips in succession; and she must have learned that some colours radiate heat more rapidly than others, so that she could tell white from black by the different degree of warmth which it imparted to her lips. This is, perhaps, one of the most extraordinary instances of nicety of touch which can be quoted. The same girl used to astonish incredulous visitors by reading the large letters of the maker's name, written in their hats, while they held them behind her back.

[*North American Review.*]

* Nicholas Saunderson was born in 1682, and died in 1739. He lost his sight by the small-pox when only a year old. Having shown considerable talent as a boy, he was sent to Cambridge, where he pursued his studies with such advantage, that he became a lecturer, and was afterwards chosen Professor of Mathematics in that University.

LIFE consists not of a series of illustrious actions, the greater part of our time passes in compliance with necessities, in the performance of daily duties, in the removal of small inconveniences, in the procurement of petty pleasures, and we are well or ill at ease, as the main stream of life glides on smoothly, or is ruffled by small, or frequent interruptions.—JOHNSON.

LINES ADDRESSED TO A FRIEND ON HIS BIRTH-DAY.

[FROM AN ARABIAN POET.]

THE beautiful thought, contained in this poem, has been well expressed in the translations of two eminent Oriental scholars, Sir William Jones, and Mr. Carlyle, formerly Professor of Arabic at Cambridge. The reader may compare them, and judge.

MR. CARLYLE'S.

When born, in tears we saw thee drowned,
Whilst thine assembled friends around
With smiles their joy confest:
So live, that at thy parting hour
They may the flood of sorrow pour,
And thou in smiles be drest.

SIR WILLIAM JONES'S.

On parent's lap, a naked, new-born child,
Weeping thou sat'st, while all around thee smiled:
So live, that sinking into death's last sleep,
Calm thou may'st smile, while all around thee weep.

THE modest deportment of really wise men, when contrasted with the assuming air of the young and ignorant, may be compared to the different appearance of wheat, which, while its ear is empty, holds up its head proudly, but as soon as it is filled with grain, bends modestly down, and withdraws from observation.

Whoso him bethought,
Inwardly and oft,
How sore it were, to flit
From life into the pit,
From pit into pain
Which ne'er shall cease again,
He would not do one sin,
All the world to win.—*Old Epitaph.*

Of all sights which can soften and humanize the heart of man, there is none that ought so surely to reach it as that of innocent children, enjoying the happiness which is their proper and natural portion.—SOUTHEY.

To live holily is the way to die safely, happily. If death be terrible, yet innocence is bold, and will neither fear itself nor let us fear; where, contrariwise, wickedness is cowardly, and cannot abide any glimpse of light, or show of danger.—BISHOP HALL.

UNINTERRUPTED happiness is not, nor never will be, the lot of man. It is only to be found in another, and a better world, and therefore it is that pain, mental as well as bodily, is, if not constantly, at least very generally, the companion of our journey through this life. Pain is often, in fact, the medium through which we become purified, and prepared for an infinitely higher state of being, of whose faculties, and powers of enjoyment, we can form now but a very inadequate idea.

CAN any man be faithful in much, that is faithless in a little?—JEREMY TAYLOR.

WHERE there is the most love of God, there will be there the truest and most enlarged philanthropy.—SOUTHEY.

LET us not so much solicit God for any temporal advantage, as for a heart that may fit us for it, and that HE would be the chooser as well as the giver of our portion in this world, for he is alone able to suit and sanctify our condition to us, and us to our condition.—SOUTH.

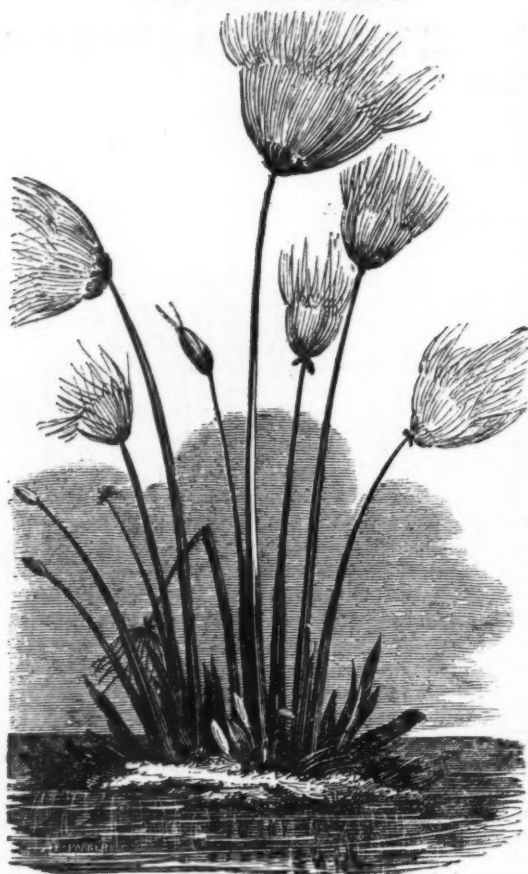
WHO is the honest man?

He that doth still and strongly good pursue,
To God, his neighbour, and himself most true;
Whom neither force nor fawning can
Unpin or wrench from giving all their due.

Whom none can work nor woo,
To use in any thing a trick or sleight,
For above all things he abhors deceit:
His words and works and fashion too,
All of a piece, and all are clear and straight.

HERBERT.

THE PAPYRUS PLANT.



THE CYPERUS PAPYRUS.

THE Papyrus Plant, the *Cyperus Papyrus*, according to Champollion, has ceased to grow in Egypt; [but in this he is evidently mistaken.] The ancient Arabs called it *berd*; it grew principally in marshy places, and its culture was a source of riches for the inhabitants of the borders of the ancient lakes of Bourlos, and of Menzaleh, or Termis. The Baroness Minutoli says that it is to be met with in the environs of Damietta, and on the banks of the lake Menzaleh. It is, however, exceedingly scarce. M. Savary states, that it is only to be met with about Damietta and the lake Menzaleh, and observes that all travellers who have not visited this part of Egypt, make no mention of the plant. This author quotes from Strabo, who calls it *biblos*, and says that it is indigenous to Lower Egypt; he describes it very clearly, and alludes to a restriction of its growth to particular places. It grows abundantly in Syracuse, and Captain Smyth has figured it, and described it with great precision. It floats as it grows; the principal root runs horizontally near the surface of the water, and throws out long filaments, which descend perpendicularly downwards, whilst numerous triangular green stems shoot upwards, eight or ten feet, and bear, on the crown, a fibrous tuft of fine filaments, which, near their extremities, are again subdivided into others, leaving small seedy flowerets. This plant is supposed to have been sent from Egypt by Ptolemy Philadelphus, as a present to Hiero.

Paper is supposed to have been made of the yellow pellicle that surrounds the stem near the root; but Captain Smyth was more successful, by following the directions of Pliny, with the cellular substance of the whole stem cut thin, and the slices laid over each other transversely at right angles, and well pressed.

The ancients extracted sugar from this plant, and made cordage and canvass of its fibres. It served as a medicine for the sick, as an article of food, and also for fuel. The monopoly of this useful plant by the government of Egypt, alluded to by Strabo, probably occasioned its scarcity. M. de Sacy, quoting from an Arabic writer, whose MS. is in the Imperial Library, states that the Egyptians wrote on the paper of Egypt, and that it was made from a reed called *berdi*. Joseph is said to have been the first fabricator of this paper. The Greeks wrote upon silk, parchment, and other substances, and also on the paper of Egypt. Pliny gives a very full description of the mode of preparing the paper from the Papyrus plant. He says, the stem of the plant is divided with a kind of needle into thin plates, or slender pellicles, each of them as large as the plant will admit. These form the elements of which the sheets of paper are composed. The pellicles in the centre are the best, and they diminish in value as they depart from it. As they were separated from the reed, they were extended on a table, and laid across each other at right angles. In this state they were moistened by the water of the Nile, and while wet were put under a press, and afterwards exposed to the rays of the sun. The water of the Nile was said to have a gummy quality, sufficient to make the layers of the plant adhere to each other; but Mr. Bruce has shown, that the plant itself is adequate to this, from the quantity of saccharine matter it contains, and that the water of the Nile does not, in any degree, possess this property. Sometimes, however, perhaps when the plant did not contain a sufficient portion of sugar, a kind of paste made of wheat-flour was used for this purpose. The size of the paper seldom exceeded two feet, and it was frequently much less. Mr. Bruce made paper of the plant, which he saw growing in Egypt and Abyssinia. The plant must formerly have been very abundant, for Cassiodorus speaks of it as forming a forest on the banks of the Nile. "There," says he, "rises to the view this forest without branches, this thicket without leaves, this harvest of the waters, this ornament of the marshes." Prosper Alpinus and Guilandin, both saw it about two centuries since, and the latter remarks, that the inferior and succulent part of it was eaten by the common people.

The Egyptian paper was manufactured principally at Alexandria, but also at Memphis and other Egyptian cities. At the close of the third century, the traffic in paper was very flourishing, and it continued until the fifth century, for St. Jerome says it was much in use during his time, although a very high impost was put upon it. This impost was abolished by Theodoric, King of Italy, in the sixth century, upon which Cassiodorus wrote a letter, in which he congratulates the whole world on the removal of the impost from an article of traffic so essential to the convenience and improvement of mankind, and to the cultivation and prosperity of the arts, science, and commerce.

[PETTIGREW'S History of Mummies]

If men have been termed pilgrims, and life a journey, then we may add, that the Christian pilgrimage far surpasses all others, in the following important particulars in the goodness of the road, in the beauty of the prospects, in the excellence of the company, and in the vast superiority of the accommodation provided for the Christian traveller, when he has finished his course.—C.

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